

ER 61-5840/a

24 JUL 1961

*Ure*  
Mr. Peter Kurta

STAT

Dear Peter:

Thank you very much for your letter of 18 July and for the enclosures which you were thoughtful in bringing to my attention.

I know that you will find your work in St. Petersburg a very challenging one and I want to wish you every success. In regard to an association or organization which will be able to help you, I am sorry that I do not know of any at the moment. However, I will certainly keep this in mind and, should something turn up, I will get in touch with you.

With my best wishes,

Sincerely,

*8917*  
Allen W. Dulles  
Director

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O/DCI/[ ] bd (24 July 1961)

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PETER KURTZ



61-5840 STAT

July 18, 1961

Dear Allen:

I do not think I am mistaken, if I presume, for old time's sake of your old violin teacher, that you will be interested in what I have done in the deep south, in Florence, S. C.

I know you will be happy to hear that thru my work in only three years, I was able, at the end of my activities there, to inspire the enclosed Editorial. Much as every artist and sincere teacher needs money, I prize this heart-warming tribute more than all the riches in the world. Also the other clipping will tell you how I was made Honorary Member of the South Carolina String Teacher's Association and that the Florence String Ensemble, which I conducted, received a Double Award of Merit for outstanding achievement in the Crusade for Strings for the years 1959-1961, at the 31st Convention of the National Federation of Music Clubs.

Even though I am happy and thankful I could do this for the cause of the Strings, this does not bring home the bacon, as my life-long friend Olin Downes used to tell me. Nevertheless, thru the recognition of my services to the cause of String Players in the United States, the Musician's Fund, thru the efforts of Dr. Norman Vincent Peale and Leopold Mannes of the Mannes College of Music, presented to them my need of carrying on, and I was awarded \$50.00 a month.

Feeling my work was completed in Florence, I have come here once again, as there is a broader field for what I desire to accomplish. I feel I still have a great work to do, namely, to train young teachers to carry on the tradition of Leopold Auer, who was the teacher of Heifetz, Elman and myself. This is based on the fact of the great need of String Players, or we won't be able to have Symphony Orchestras and because of what I have been able to accomplish all my life.

Do you know of an association or organization, like the Ford Foundation, where you could use your influence, like Dr. Peale, and present to them what I have done and desire to do for our country.

Perhaps you can remember when you were a young man, when I had already started to do this kind of work in your dear Mother's Settlement Center in the Italian District in Auburn, N. Y., when I gave my services free as a teacher and Orchestra Conductor. That kind of thing I have done all my life, but now it is not so easy to carry on financially, as I was able to do when I was younger.

Dear Allen, would you, in the kindness of your heart, try your influence with some organization. I understand President Kennedy is cultural-minded. Do you know if he has provided anything in the government for such causes as I desire to work for.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Peter Kunst", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

P.S. Have you been able to locate your old violin?

Founded 1628  
MARBLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH  
New York 1, N. Y.

May 24, 1961

Mr. Peter Kurtz

STAT

Dear Peter:

I have appreciated your letters. You are indeed a faithful friend, and have been over the years, and I admire your tremendously glowing, vital spirit. You are rendering an incalculable service to your community through your fine talent.

I trust you will forgive my seeming neglect, but I am under such pressure, with mail, and writing, and speaking engagements, that it is difficult to keep up my correspondence.

I do remember you in my prayers, that the Lord may bless you and keep you, and continue to give you strength to carry on in the unique service which you are able to give.

As ever,

Cordially yours,

/s/ Norman Peale

NVP:c

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## Peter Kurtz Leaves a Good Example

When Peter Kurtz leaves Florence to return to St. Petersburg, Fla., he will leave behind not only friends but a labor of love and achievement.

The veteran maestro who loves music with a passion, and the violin especially, has given to Florence the example of complete and unselfish dedication.

This he has shown both as a teacher of individual students and as director of the Florence String Ensemble. This organization has become his special love. A measure of his success with it is the certificate of merit from the National Federation of Music Clubs which Mr. Kurtz and one of his students were shown proudly displaying in Thursday's *Florence Morning News*.

We regret that Peter Kurtz is soon to leave Florence. There has been

about his bouyant spirit, his love for music and for young people who desire to be musicians that which has taught us something about life and its values.

We wish him well. We are glad he came our way.

### Post Office

We read of the dedication of new post offices and new post offices under construction and remember the talk of new post office needs in Florence, including a new central federal building and branch offices to serve the suburban area.

This is to say that the news columns of the *Florence Morning News* are open to an announcement of a new post office building for Florence anytime it is ready.

12-B—THE FLORENCE MORNING NEWS Thursday, June 22, 1961

# Kurtz Leaving Violin Post To Return to St. Petersburg

Three years of teaching Florence youngsters to play the violin will end Saturday, July 1, for Peter Kurtz.

He announced Wednesday he would return to St. Petersburg, Fla., where he will continue teaching and playing.

Kurtz said he was leaving Florence reluctantly but he felt St. Petersburg offered greater opportunities.

If enough students indicate an interest, Kurtz said he would commute once each month from St. Petersburg to teach them.

WHILE IN semi-retirement, he came here in April, 1958, to instruct students in a string strengthening program for Florence Symphony Orchestra.

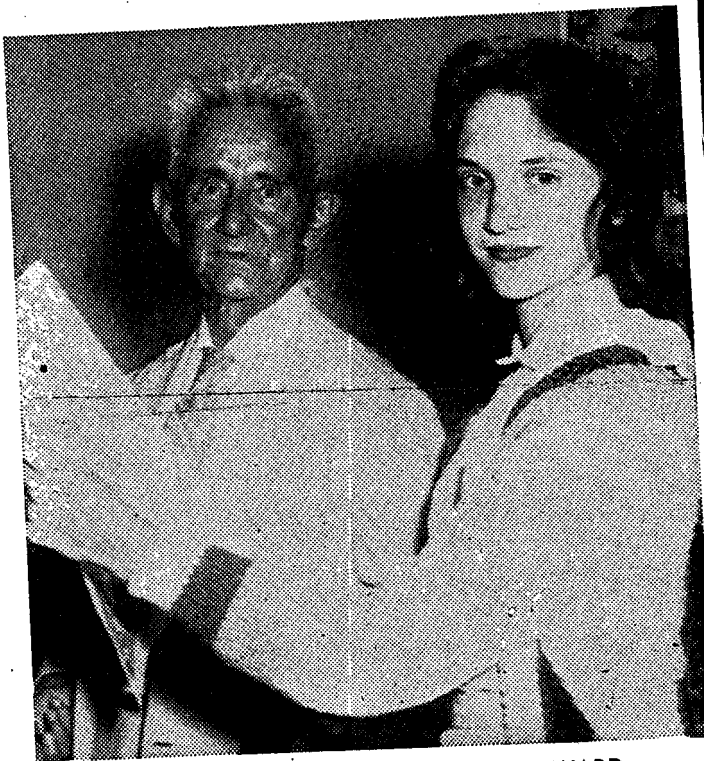
The program developed into a string ensemble, which Kurtz headed as conductor and won local and state acclaim.

The most recent award was a certificate of merit from National Federation of Music Clubs citing both Kurtz and the ensemble for the three-year string program.

An exhibition prepared by Mrs. Kurtz and entered in a String Crusade display at the organization's 31st convention was responsible for the award.

The certificate was signed by Dorothy D. Bullosk, president; Dr. Henry Bruinsma, chairman of the symphony orchestra society, and Dorothy D. Coolidge, chairman of the chamber music society.

In addition, Kurtz was recent-



PETER KURTZ SHOWS NATIONAL AWARD  
... to one of violin students, Chick McElveen  
(Morning News photo)

ly made an honorary member of the South Carolina String Teachers Assn.

In the beginning, Kurtz selected 10 students to receive instruction. All are members of the ensemble and five are playing with the symphony orchestra.

THE ENSEMBLE is incorporated now and is sponsored by an executive board. James Parks of Lamar is chairman. Dr. and Mrs. Gordon Bobbett,

founders of the ensemble, serve on the board along with Mrs. Lyde Hicks and Mrs. Howard DeBerry, secretary-treasurer.

Before coming to Florence, Kurtz taught violin and played in most of St. Petersburg's hotels. He plans to resume upon his return.

The city has two symphony orchestras, said Kurtz, and several members of both groups have already enrolled as students.



61-6048

23 July 1961

Mrs. Blanche W. Knopf  
Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

STAT

Dear Blanche:

It is always good to hear from you and I have not forgotten -- and have been deeply flattered by your suggestion about a book I might write.

All this is postponed until I have a little more freedom and I have not really been giving any thought to what I might do if the time for writing really returned. I only hope we can get together and trust you will let me know if you should be in Washington.

Sincerely,

AWD:JI:mfb

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